



Office of Mayor Jerry Sanders

June 28, 2006

FACT SHEET

MAYOR REMINDS FOURTH OF JULY BEACHGOERS RIP CURRENTS TAKE LIVES EVERY YEAR

*Lifeguards Demonstrate Force of Rip Currents at Mayor's News Conference
and Remind San Diegans of General Beach and Bay Regulations*

Throughout the summer months, and especially over a long holiday weekend like the 4th of July, lifeguards make hundreds of rescues from our oceans--especially in the areas where dangerous rip currents line our shores.

What exactly is a rip current?

Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from the shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer out to sea. (See example on page 2.)

It takes an experienced lifeguard or seasoned swimmer to be able to recognize where rip currents exist. Since rip currents are volatile and are constantly changing location, lifeguards will indicate to swimmers the areas in which it is safe to swim. Do not try to decide for yourself if a rip current exists. A good rule of thumb to follow is that it's always safest to swim near or in front of a lifeguard tower.

Swimmers should follow these rules to avoid rip currents:

- Swim only in areas where lifeguards are present.
- Ask the lifeguards if you are unsure where it is safe to swim.

If caught in a rip current:

- Don't fight the current.
- Swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current, then swim to shore.
- If you can't escape, float or tread water.
- If you need help, call or wave for assistance.

Other information for staying safe in the ocean and in the bay:

- The water off major beaches is divided into swimming and surfing zones.
- It's OK to body board in swim zones. Surf zones are for all hard fiberglass and stand up surf boards.
- A black and yellow checkered flag will be posted between swim and surf zones. Ask the lifeguard for the proper zone for your activity.
- Swim in designated swim zones in Mission Bay as well-marked by buoys.
- Don't be fooled by the calm water of the bay—in many places the floor of the bay suddenly drops off.
- Watch your children just as vigilantly at the bay, as in the ocean.

Beach and Bay Rules and Regulations:

Fires on the beach:

- Fires are permitted in fire squares provided by the City or in personal barbecues that sit at least one foot off the ground.
- Embers in fire squares can remain hot for many hours—never step inside or touch the ashes.
- Use a bucket of water to make sure the fire in a fire square is out.
- Coals from barbecues must be removed and deposited in specially marked “Hot Coal Containers” only that are dotted across our beaches both on the ocean and along the bay.
- Pallets are no longer allowed to be used as firewood in a fire square. It is a new code within the City (the nails remain and pose a danger once the pallet has burned).
- No fireworks are permitted on City beaches or in City parks. Fireworks are illegal in the City without a permit.

Alcohol Rules:

- Alcohol is permitted on the beaches (sand area only) from noon to 8 p.m.
- Alcohol is prohibited at all times in parking lots or walkways adjacent to the beaches.
- Kegs are permitted on the sand, but must be purchased by an adult (21 year and older) and tagged by the business from which it was purchased.
- **Kegs are prohibited on the 4th of July in all beaches and parks.**
- In most of Mission Bay Park, alcohol is permitted in both the grassy park areas and bay beaches from noon to 8 p.m. Ask a lifeguard if you are unsure if alcohol is permitted in your area.
- At some San Diego beaches alcohol is prohibited at all times. These areas include
 - La Jolla Shores and adjacent Kellogg Park
 - Marine Street Beach
 - The Clam in La Jolla
 - Santa Clara Point

Glass Containers:

- Glass containers are prohibited at all beaches and parks.

Trash:

- Bring your own trash bags to help with the clean up. Remember: There will be more than a million people at our beaches over the holiday weekend.

Dogs:

- Dogs are permitted on beaches and in all adjacent parks from 6 p.m. to 9 a.m. and must be leashed at all times.
- Dogs are permitted 24 hours a day off their leash at Dog Beach in Ocean Beach and Fiesta Island on Mission Bay.

Lost Children:

- Lost children should be reported to the nearest lifeguard, police officer or park ranger as soon as possible.
- Please let your children know that it is safe to come to a lifeguard station if they get lost on the beach, rather than wandering around looking for their family.